

Message Text

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ACTION AF-07

INFO OCT-01 EA-06 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-05 NSAE-00

PA-01 RSC-01 USIA-06 PRS-01 SP-02 /030 W

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R 070810Z NOV 74

FM USLO PEKING

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2674

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

C O N F I D E N T I A L PEKING 1931

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR PINT ET CH

SUBJECT: DEPARTURE OF ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE PRC

1. ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR MAKONNEN KEBRET DEPARTS PEKING NOV 7 FOR ADDIS ABABA, HAVING BEEN CALLED BACK ON UNUSUALLY SHORT NOTICE OF ONLY TWO WEEKS.

2. USLO HAS BEEN GETTING MIXED SIGNALS AS TO WHAT KIND OF RECEPTION MAKONNEN WILL RECEIVE UPON HIS RETURN. HE HAS TOLD US WITH RESPECT TO MILITARY LEADERSHIP THAT HE WILL BE "FACING THEM" ACROSS THE TABLE AS EARLY AS NOV 11, CONVEYING THE IMPRESSION THAT HE EXPECTS TO BE IN SOME SORT OF DIFFICULTY BECAUSE OF HIS PREVIOUS IDENTIFICATION WITH EMPEROR HAILE SELASSIE. HE HAS ALSO INDICATED THAT MILITARY LEADERS IN FACT EXPECTED HIM TO RESIGN AND REMAIN OUTSIDE COUNTRY UPON RECEIVING CALL TO RETURN -- "THIS THEY WOULD HAVE PREFERRED." MRS. MAKONNEN IN PARTICULAR HAS SHOWN SIGNS OF CONCERN AND UNEASE OVER PROSPECT OF RETURNING HOME.

3. ON THE OTHER HAND, WE HAVE HEARD FROM DIPLOMATIC SOURCES IN PEKING THAT HE EXPECTS TO BE OFFERED EITHER THE MINISTRY OF EDUCATION OR MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE. HE ALLEGEDLY HAS STRONG RESERVATIONS ABOUT EDUCATION MINISTRY BECAUSE OF PLAN TO SEND TEACHERS AND STUDENTS INTO THE COUNTRYSIDE WITH NO ORGANIZED PROGRAM TO

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UTILIZE THEM OR SUSTAIN THEM (UNHAPPINESS ON THIS

PARTICULAR SCORE HAS ALSO BEEN EXPRESSED TO US) AND ALSO HAS RESERVATIONS ABOUT AGRICULTURE BECAUSE OF DOUBTS ABOUT LAND REFORM PROGRAM.

4. MAKONNEN PERSONALLY BELIEVES HE IS BEING CALLED BACK TOO SOON FROM STANDPOINT OF LEARNING ABOUT CHINA, AND WOULD HAVE PREFERRED AN ADDITIONAL YEAR IN PEKING. HE HAS BEEN ABOUT THE MOST ACTIVE OF ALL FOREIGN AMBASSADORS IN TRAVELLING AND HAS ENJOYED UNUSUALLY GOOD ACCESS TO AREAS AND PLACES IN CHINA NOT USUALLY VISITED BY MEMBERS OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS. MAKONNEN, A CORNELL GRADUATE, HAS BEEN VERY FRIENDLY AND HELPFUL IN HIS RELATIONS WITH USLO PERSONNEL AND HAS PROVIDED US WITH USEFUL INSIGHTS INTO PRC DEVELOPMENTS.

5. FOR WHAT IT'S WORTH, AT FAREWELL RECEPTION GIVEN BY MAKONNEN IN PEKING'S INTERNATIONAL CLUB NOV. 6, SEVERAL MEMBERS OF THE PRC PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY WERE PRESENT. THIS MIGHT BE CONSIDERED UNUSUAL IN THAT ETHIOPIAN EMBASSY DOES NOT HAVE MILITARY ATTACHE ON ITS ROLLS, AND COULD INDICATE THAT ETHIOPIANS AND CHINESE HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING DISCUSSIONS ON MILITARY MATTERS OF SOME KIND.
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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: DIPLOMATIC PERSONNEL RECALL
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 07 NOV 1974
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: KelleyW0
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1974PEKING01931
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D740320-0130
From: PEKING
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1974/newtext/t19741163/aaaacbeo.tel
Line Count: 85
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: KelleyW0
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 18 JUL 2002
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <18 JUL 2002 by elyme>; APPROVED <31 MAR 2003 by KelleyW0>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: DEPARTURE OF ETHIOPIAN AMBASSADOR TO THE PRC
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, ET, CH, (KEBRET, MAKONNEN)
To: STATE ADDIS ABABA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005